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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

As required by 37 CFR § 1.173(c), Applicant states:

1. Claims 2-10, 12-21, and 23-32 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicant CANCELS Claims 1 and 11, and AMENDS allowable Claims 2-10 to be in independent form including all of the features of base Claim 1.

Applicant greatly appreciates the Examiner's indication that Claims 21 and 23-32 are allowed, and that Claims 2-10 and 12-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tsutsumi et al. (JP 09-018272). Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Baer et al. (U.S. 5,283,037). Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Shimoe et al. (EP 0 734 120). Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ueda et al. (U.S. 6,037,847). Claims 1 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yutaka (GB 2 288 503).

As noted above, Applicant has canceled Claims 1 and 11 and amended allowable Claims 2-10 to be in independent form including all of the features of allowable Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejections of Claims 1 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tsutsumi et al., Baer et al., Shimoe et al., Ueda et al., and Yutaka are moot.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 2-10 are allowable. Claims 12-20 are dependent upon Claims 2-10, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that Claims 2-10 are allowable. Claims 21 and 23-32 are allowed, as indicated by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

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The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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